

gardens in reducing pollution from stormwater runoff, members of the Rutgers University Cooperative Extension Water Resources program and University of Connecticut's Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials Program have collaborated on easily translatable training programs for residents and neighborhoods, including underserved communities.

To highlight the important work of State and local governments in environmental regulation, the EPA awarded a 2012 Governmental Environmental Merit Award to Connecticut's Department of Public Health's Drinking Water Section, charged with regulating and administering Connecticut's water system. These hardworking public employees are heroes in times of crisis. In the aftermath of Tropical Storm Irene in 2011, this team offered assistance to nearly 770,000 constituents who had lost power and issued boil water guidance for 16,000 residents.

Lastly, Ethan Allen Operations, Inc., headquartered in Danbury, CT, and the Greenwich Hospital were awarded in the Business, Industry, Trade, or Professional category in recognition of their industry leadership. Ethan Allen has been on the forefront of reducing air pollutant emissions, eco-friendly chemicals, and reduction in waste output. Greenwich Hospital has used innovative, healing rain gardens to promote health as well as manage the area's stormwater runoff, and has assisted other New England area hospitals in instituting this type of sustainable landscaping for their communities.

Congratulations to these remarkable Connecticut ecological vanguards—environmentalists, scientists, and local leaders who have collaborated with others to confront important global issues with tenacity, creativity, and courage. As we have seen, especially recently in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, our Nation's environmentalists are true altruists. I invite my Senate colleagues to applaud these commendable Connecticut companies and individuals, and thank them for their dedication to preserving our landscapes, seascapes, and climate for future generations.

REMEMBERING THE VICTIMS OF SANDY HOOK ELEMENTARY

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, although the Newtown community is very much still in mourning, I stand here today to remember 20 innocent children and 6 remarkable adults. I am hopeful that the memories of loved ones can provide some solace in the face of senseless violence. And I hope that as we continue to share stories, our national community will bind together and hearts can begin to heal.

When President Obama addressed the Nation, he spoke of Sandy Hook Elementary School as a compassionate community: parents holding their children's hands on their way to school, teachers meeting them at the door, principals keeping watch.

I have seen, firsthand, tragedy hit this tight-knit community. Last Friday morning, I went to the Sandy Hook firehouse. I went as a public official, but what I saw was through the eyes of a parent. There were moments of unspeakable grief for parents emerging from the firehouse who realized their children were not coming home. I will live always with these sights and sounds of that day.

I have also seen this remarkable community come together in solidarity. The firefighters and first responders are mostly volunteers. Neighbors are like family members. I have the utmost confidence that this beautiful town will heal through deep-rooted relationships and collective strength.

We must remember that these children were dearly loved by parents and teachers who would give everything for them. And these adult victims modeled selfless love for their students. In this spirit of love, community, and compassion, we remember the 26 fallen today.

Twelve little girls passed away on Friday, and we honor them for bringing bursts of light and laughter and love into the lives of all who knew them:

Charlotte Bacon was an outgoing and persistent red head, a member of a Girl Scout troop led by her mother.

Olivia Engel was a great big sister to her younger brother and family dog and was looking forward to playing an angel in her church's upcoming pageant.

Catherine Hubbard had a passion for animals and greeted each day with a smile.

Jessica Rekos loved horseback riding and learning about orcas.

Josephine Gay had just turned 7 and found joy in riding her bike around the neighborhood.

Madeleine Hsu had just turned 6 in July and was remembered for wearing bright, floral dresses.

Ana Marquez-Greene loved to sing and would leave love notes under her parents' pillow.

Emilie Parker was a mentor to her younger siblings, teaching them how to dance and laugh, and was eager to try new things.

Caroline Previdi was a spunky young gymnast who loved to draw and dance.

Grace McDonnell liked wearing bows in her hair and dreamed of living at the beach and becoming a painter.

Avielle Richman took up archery when she was inspired by a female hero in the Disney movie, *Brave*, and is remembered for her joyful giggles.

Allison Wyatt was an eager, energetic first-grader, who was helpful to her peers and loving to family and friends.

Eight little boys passed away on Friday and will be remembered for their joy of life and boundless energy:

Daniel Barden would ride on his father's shoulders on the way to the school bus every morning and was missing his two front teeth.

Dylan Hockley liked to play tag at the bus stop with his neighbors and dress up like Shrek or Superman.

Jesse Lewis would accompany his dad to work at building sites which he happily explored and was learning how to ride a horse.

James Mattioli had just learned how to ride a bike and was discovering that he liked math.

Jack Pinto was a Giants fan and part of a youth wrestling team.

Noah Pozner was best friends with his twin sister Arielle, and older sister Sophia, and liked figuring out how things worked.

Chase Kowalski loved riding his bike outdoors and playing with his five siblings.

Benjamin Wheeler studied piano with his mother and threw leaves in the air with his friends and his brother Nate.

These children were raised with dance and music, with laughter and hope. The parents of victim Grace McDonnell have kept their house ablaze with Christmas lights, even in the wake of the shooting, perhaps in tribute to their daughter, who they called "the love and light of our family." Krista and Rich Rekos called their daughter Jessica, their "rock."

You can feel the energy of these children in the stories that are being told. Although their lives were cut short, they contributed to the world around them by learning, growing, and loving.

Six beloved Sandy Hook faculty members—selfless heroes of the Newtown community—were also taken last Friday. They dedicated themselves to the children around them.

Dawn Hochsprung, the 47-year-old principal of Sandy Hook Elementary School, instinctually lunged in front of the shooter and she was killed in the line of duty. For the students of Sandy Hook, she was the "Reading Fairy," inspiring what she hoped would be a lifelong appreciation for books. Before coming to Sandy Hook, she worked as a principal in the towns of Bethlehem and Woodbury. She was dedicated to education and to family, crediting her own mother for the care she expressed towards others.

Anne Marie Murphy, 52 years old, worked at Sandy Hook Elementary School as a special education assistant and raised four children of her own. She has been remembered as a positive spirit and source of good energy. She was generous and loving, and died shielding the innocent from harm. In a public statement, the family of Dylan Hockley expressed their gratitude to Ms. Murphy and comfort that their son died in the arms of his beloved teacher.

Mary Sherlach, 56 years old, had served Sandy Hook as their school psychologist since 1994 and was a year away from retiring. She earned her undergraduate degree at SUNY Cortland and master's degree at Southern Connecticut State University. Last Friday, she showed her true spirit of selflessness when she and Principal Hochsprung ran towards the shooter to stop him. Her adult daughters live in New Jersey and Washington, DC.

According to her loved ones, at age 30 Lauren Rousseau had landed her dream

job as a substitute teacher at Sandy Hook—something she had longed to do since age 6. She found a home in this community and gave her life caring for its children. A graduate of the University of Connecticut, she cheered on the women's basketball team and enjoyed going to Broadway shows.

Rachel D'Avino was an intern at Sandy Hook—a 29-year-old who was in the process of learning how to help children with special needs. She was studying at the University of Saint Joseph for an advanced degree in applied behavior analysis and provided one-on-one instruction to various students. Her boyfriend was planning on asking for her hand in marriage on Christmas Eve.

Victoria Soto loved going to work each day as a first grade teacher at Sandy Hook Elementary and was, in turn, beloved by her students. She was raised in a family of public servants and graduated from Eastern Connecticut State University. She was attending night school at Southern Connecticut State for a master's degree. When the gunman shot his way into her classroom, she protected the children under her care without hesitation. Her story and those of her colleagues, who put their lives on the line, will be remembered around the Nation.

During this holiday season, we pray that the Newtown community can find peace and solace. This tragedy reminds us of both the fragility and preciousness of life, and the healing grace of love.

RECOGNIZING THE HUDSON RIVER SCHOOL OF PAINTING

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, in 2010, Senators GILLIBRAND and SCHUMER passed a resolution honoring the Hudson River School painters for their contributions to the United States. Today, I join my colleagues in paying tribute to this significant, historic artistic movement and recognize its ties to Connecticut.

The Hudson River School of Painting originated in the Hudson River Valley in the 1920s and consists of landscapes featuring highly detailed and realistic scenes of American wilderness. Painters attributed to this style include Thomas Cole, Asher Durand, Jasper Cropsey, Sanford Robinson Gifford, George Inness, Worthington Whittredge, Albert Bierstadt, and Thomas Morgan.

Two of the most influential painters of the Hudson River School have Connecticut roots: John Kensett and John Frederic Church. Born in Cheshire, Kensett worked in New Haven as an engraver and traveled throughout New England, painting scenes of his cherished homeland. At his home on Contentment Island near Darien, he painted some of his most notable works. Church was born in Hartford and became famous for his landscapes of exotic locales of South America, Western Europe, and the Middle East.

The Long Island Sound—a treasure of Connecticut and the East Coast—was a common subject lovingly portrayed by Hudson River School painters, in particular by Kensett, who would frequent the Sound to or from his studio in Darien. Famously, Kensett's "Twilight in the Cedars at Darien," portrays a serene sun setting over a dense swath of forest in Connecticut.

The Hudson River School has not only inspired painters for generations, but led to the development of the National Park Service under President Theodore Roosevelt. In Connecticut and throughout the Nation, this influential style has inspired environmental conservation efforts historically and to the present day.

These beautiful, idyllic landscapes, untouched by man, inspire us to protect our land, air, and water; future generations must not look at these paintings as ancient artifact. Connecticut is closely tied to the Hudson River School, and we must continue to preserve its legacy now and in the future by learning more about the School and its painters. I encourage my colleagues and their constituents to engage in this worthwhile pursuit.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-8730. A communication from the Acting Principal Deputy Secretary of Defense (Reserve Affairs), transmitting, pursuant to law, the National Guard Youth Challenge Program 2012 annual report; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-8731. A communication from the General Counsel of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Relocation of Regulations" (RIN2590-AA56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 28, 2012; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8732. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the Western Balkans that was declared in Executive Order 13219 of June 26, 2001; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8733. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 12947 with respect to terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8734. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to North Korea that was declared in Executive Order 13466 of June 26, 2008; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8735. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to blocking property of the Government of the

Russian Federation relating to the disposition of highly enriched uranium extracted from nuclear weapons that was declared in Executive Order 13617 of June 25, 2012; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8736. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans and Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes; Ohio; Redesignation of the Ohio Portion of the Huntington-Ashland 1997 Annual Fine Particulate Matter Nonattainment Area to Attainment" (FRL No. 9764-9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 28, 2012; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-8737. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Colorado; Regional Haze State Implementation Plan" (FRL No. 9734-8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 28, 2012; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-8738. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Primary Drinking Water Regulations: Revisions to the Total Coliform Rule" (FRL No. 9684-8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 28, 2012; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-8739. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Significant New Use Rule on Certain Chemical Substances; Removal of Significant New Use Rules" (FRL No. 9369-8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 28, 2012; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-8740. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Utah; Determination of Clean Data for the 1987 PM10 Standard for the Ogden Area" (FRL No. 9765-6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 28, 2012; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-8741. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Alaska; Eagle River PM10 Nonattainment Area Limited Maintenance Plan and Redesignation Request" (FRL No. 9764-7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 28, 2012; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-8742. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania; Determination of Attainment of the 2006 24-hour Fine Particulate Matter Standard for the Philadelphia-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE Nonattainment Area" (FRL No. 9765-9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 28, 2012; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.